

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7248

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 3503

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: COSTA GOMES-CUNHAL MEETING

REF: LISBON 3439 (DTG 221103Z MAY 76)

SUMMARY: COSTA GOMES KEPT TALK OF HIS CANDIDACY ALIVE BY MEETING WITH A COSTA-GOMES-FOR-PRESIDENT SUPPORT AND DISCUSSING ANGOLA WITH CUNHAL. THE CUNHAL-COSTA GOMES MEETING SOUGHT TO UNDERSCORE THE PCP'S ROLE AS "PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTOR" WITH THE MPLA WHILE PROMOTING COSTA GOMES'S IMAGE AS A HELPFUL CONCILIATOR. END SUMMARY.

1. COSTA GOMES: PCP LEADER ALVARO CUNHAL LEFT SMILING AFTER A ONE-HOUR MAY 24 MEETING WITH COSTA GOMES. THE ANNOUNCED SUBJECTS WERE THE VISIT OF PCP CENTRAL
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COMMITTEE MEMBER SERGIO VILARIQUES TO LUANDA (REFTEL)
AND THE "POLITICAL SITUATION." COSTA GOMES ALSO MET

WITH A MEMBER OF THE GROUP SUPPORTING HIM FOR PRESIDENT.

2. OTELO: THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF ON MAY 24 AUTHORIZED MAJ OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO TO PROCEED WITH HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, DESPITE HIS STATUS OF CONDITIONAL LIBERTY. THE SUPREME COURT WILL RULE ON HIS ELIGIBILITY IF AND WHEN NOMINATION PAPERS ARE FILED. THE PROVISION OF THE ELECTION LAW AFFECTING OTELO PROVIDES THAT A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT HE IS IN FULL EXERCISE OF HIS POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS. OTELO VOTED IN THE PARIL 25 ELECTION DESPITE HIS "CONDITIONAL LIBERTY" STATUS.

3. AZEVEDO FACILITIES: EMBOFF WHO ON MAY 24 VISITED OFFICES BEING USED BY AZEVEDO CAMPAIGN TO COLLECT SIGNATURES FOR NOMINATION CAME AWAY WITH IMPRESSION THAT EITHER PRIME MINISTER IS CULTIVATING UNDERDOG IMAGE OR HIS CAMPAIGN IS STRAPPED FOR FUNDS. OFFICES OCCUPY SMALL FOURTH-FLOOR APARTMENT ON ISLATED LISBON SIDE-STREET; THE ONLY EXTERNAL SIGN OF AZEVEDO GROUP'S PRESENCE IS A SMALL, HANDPAINTED SIGN IN FRONT OF BUILDING. AZEVEDO'S CAMPAIGN STAFF, HOWEVER, IS CURRENTLY OPERATING OUT OF PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE RESIDENCE RATHER THAN CAMPAIGN OFFICE.

4. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY: THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC WILL HOLD ITS FIRST SESSION JUNE 3 TO JUNE 15. THE ASSEMBLY OFFICERS WILL BE DESIGNATED AT THAT TIME FROM THE THREE PARTIES WHICH RECEIVED THE MOST VOTES IN THE APRIL 25 ELECTIONS: THE PS, THE PPD, AND THE CDS. THEREAFTER, THE ASSEMBLY WILL ADJOURN UNTIL OCTOBER 15 WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EXTRAORDINARY SESSIONS TO INAUGURATE THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC AND TO PASS ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM.

5. SIGNS OF THE TIMES DEPARTMENT: CABINET APPROVED MAY 15 A MEASURE ALLOWING REINSTATEMENT OF PERSONS PURGED FROM THEIR JOBS FOR POLITICAL MOTIVES SINCE THE APRIL 1974 COUP. THE BILL, BASED ON A CONSTITUTIONAL
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PROHIBITION AGAINST DISMISSALS WITHOUT JUST CAUSE OR FOR POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL REAONS, CHARGES THE MINISTRY OF LABOR WITH REVIEWING CASES OF DOUBTFUL LEGALITY.

6. COMMENT: THE CUNHAL-COSTA GOMES MEETING SOUGHT TO UNDERSCORE THE PCP'S ROLE AS "PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTOR" WITH THE MPLA WHILE PROMOTING COSTA GOMES AS A HELPFUL CONCILIATOR. COMING ON THE HEELS OF THE BACKING FOR COSTA GOMES BY THE FELLOW-TRAVELING MDP AND A GROUP OF PORTUGUESE LEFTISTS RESIDENT IN ANGOLA, COMMUNIST TACTICAL SUPPORT FOR A

COSTA GOMES CANDIDACY IS TRANSPARENT.
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